ON THE BUDDHA AND HIS BONES: THE CONCEPTION OF A RELIC IN THE INSCRIPTIONS OF NĀGĀRJUNIKOṆḌA

GREGORY SCHOPEN

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

An attempt to show that when a doctrinally important passage in the Mahācetiya inscriptions of Nāgārjunikoṇḍa is punctuated properly, and its vocabulary placed in its proper context, it turns out to be yet another piece of evidence for a pervasive—though little noticed—early Indian Buddhist conception of a "relic."

NĀGĀRJUNIKOṆḌA, WHICH LIES NOW AT the bottom of a man-made lake, was a rich source not only of Buddhist and Hindu archaeological and art historical remains, but also of inscriptions. It has proved to be, as a consequence, an equally rich source of conundrums and a well-watered ground for speculation. There has been a persistent series of attempts, for example, to see elements of the Mahāyāna in the early phases of Nāgārjunikoṇḍa in spite of the fact that there is no actual epigraphical or art historical evidence for this movement anywhere in the Andhra area prior to the 5th/6th century C.E., and in spite of the fact that what epigraphical and art historical evidence we actually have richly documents the presence there of non-Mahāyāna groups.[1]

The inscriptions from Nāgārjunikoṇḍa are difficult. They are difficult because of "the want of precision of which they show ample evidence." Vogel has noted that "considering that these inscriptions were meant to be perpetual records of pious donations made by ladies of royal blood, the careless manner in which they have been recorded is astonishing."[2] They are also difficult because they are in many ways atypical. They contain a number of phrases and formulae not found elsewhere in Indian Buddhist inscriptions so that we do not have, in many cases, parallels to assist us.[3] This difficulty is offset, and then only in part, by the fact that these inscriptions tend to be highly repetitive; there are frequently numerous "copies" of the same basic inscription. I would like here to look at one of these atypical phrases that has important implications for Buddhist doctrinal history, and to

[1] N. Dutt, "Discovery of a Bone Relic at an Ancient Centre of Mahāyāna," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 5 (1929): 794–96; Dutt, "Notes on the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa Inscriptions," *Indian Historical Quarterly* 7 (1931): 633–53; H. Sarkar, *Studies in Early Buddhist Architecture of India* (Delhi, 1966), 74–96; E. S. Rosen, "Buddhist Architecture and Lay Patronage at Nāgārjunakoṇḍa," in A. L. Dallapiccola and S. Z. Lallemant (eds.), *The Stūpa, Its Religious, Historical and Architectural Significance* (Wiesbaden, 1980), 112–26; A. and H. Wayman, *The Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā* (New York, 1974), 1–4; A. Wayman, "The Mahāsāṃghika and the Tathāgatagarbha," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 1 (1978): 42–43; etc.—On the Mahāyāna in Andhra art see D. Barrett, "The Later School of Amarāvatī and Its Influence," *Art and Letters* 28.2 (1954): 41–53; D. Barrett, *Sculptures from Amaravati in the British Museum* (London, 1954), 59; Ét. Lamotte, "Mañjuśrī," *T'oung Pao* 68 (1960): 4; on the Mahāyāna in epigraphical sources see G. Schopen, "Mahāyāna in Indian Inscriptions," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 21 (1979): 1–19; Schopen, "The Inscription on the Kuṣān Image of Amitābha and the Character of the Early Mahāyāna in India," *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 10.2 (1987): 99–137. Since writing the first of these I have come across a single instance of the Mahāyāna formula in an inscription from the Andhra area; it dates to the 5th century; see T. N. Ramachandran, *Nāgārjunikoṇḍa 1938* (Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, No. 71) (Calcutta, 1953), 29 (III).

[2] J. Ph. Vogel, "Prakrit Inscriptions from a Buddhist Site at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa," *Epigraphia Indica* (= *EI*) 20 (1929): 11–12.

[3] Cf. G. Schopen, "Filial Piety and the Monk in the Practice of Indian Buddhism: A Question of 'Sinicization' Viewed from the Other Side," *T'oung Pao* 70 (1984): 121–22.

exploit the advantage that the existence of multiple copies presents us with.

Most of the pillar inscriptions connected with the *Mahācetiya*[4] are structured in exactly the same way. They begin with (1) the word *sidhaṃ*, "success!"; this is followed usually by (2) an invocation to the Buddha which consists of the word *namo*, "adoration to," followed by a string of epithets of the Buddha in the genitive. Then comes (3) the name of the place at which the gift recorded was made, put in the locative; (4) the name of the donor, her 'pedigrees' and relationships; (5) the purpose or intent behind her gift; (6) the nature of the gift, etc. We will be concerned here only with the second and third elements: the invocation consisting of the *namo* plus the string of epithets in the genitive, and the name of the place at which the gift was made in the locative.

The first thing to notice is that the number of epithets in the string of genitives following *namo* varies. The fullest form of the formula containing the invocation and the name of the location at which the gift was made is, in the Prakrit original:

> namo bhagavato deva-rāja-sakatasa supabudha-bodhino savaṃñuno sava-sat-ānukaṃpakasa jita-rāga-dosa-moha-vipamutasa mahāgaṇi-vasabha-gaṃdha-hathisa saṃma-saṃbudhasa dhātuvara-parigahitasa mahācetiye . . . (C3)

Sircar translates this into Sanskrit as:

> namaḥ bhagavate devarājasatkṛtāya suprabuddhabodhaye sarvajñāya sarvasattvānukampakāya-jitarāgadoṣamoha- (= āsaktighṛṇājñāna-)-vipramuktāya mahāgaṇi-vṛṣabhagandhahastine (= bahusaṅkhyakaśiṣya-mahācāryeṣu pradhānaḥ) samyaksaṃbuddhāya dhātuvara-parigṛhītāya (= nirvāṇaprāptāya) | [asmin] mahācaitye . . .[5]

and Vogel puts it into English as:

> Adoration to the Lord, the Supreme Buddha, honoured by the Lord of the gods, omniscient, compassionate towards all sentient beings, freed from lust, hatred and delusion which have been conquered by him, the bull and musk-elephant among great spiritual leaders, the perfectly Enlightened One, who is absorbed by the best of the elements (i.e., by Nirvāṇa). At the Mahāchetiya . . .[6]

At least four "copies" of this same inscription omit everything after *deva-rāja-sakatasa* up to *saṃma-saṃbudhasa*, reading as a consequence:

> namo bhagavato deva-rāja-sakatasa saṃma-saṃbudhasa dhātuvara-parigahitasa mahācetiye . . .[7]

Vogel's interpretation of what he takes to be the last of the string of epithets—*dhātuvara-parigahita*, "absorbed by the best of the elements (i.e., by Nirvāṇa)"—was suggested to him by de la Vallée Poussin who added: "If the inscriptions belonged to the Mahāsanghikas, a conjectural explanation of *dhātuvara* as *Dharmadhātu* would not be excluded. The *Dharmadhātu* was sometimes a kind of Buddhist Brahman for the followers of the Mahāyāna."[8] Sircar also has taken the term in much the same way, glossing it with *nirvāṇaprāpta*, and Dutt, who translates the compound by "possessed of the excellent dhātu," wants to see in it evidence that raises "the presumption that the Andhaka conception of Nirvāṇa was different from that of the Theravādins or their sub-sect the Mahīśāsakas,"[9] which de la Vallée Poussin at least does not query.[10] A. M. Shastri, finally, sees in the expression evidence indicating that "the Andhakas . . . upheld the docetic theory and believed that the Buddha was supra-mundane," and, following de la Vallée Poussin, that it "most probably alludes to the Kāya doctrine of the Mahāyānists for whom the Buddha was not a historical personality."[11]

This line of interpretation, which connects the expression with the development of Mahāyāna scho-

[4] Vogel, *EI* 20 (1929), A2–A4; B1–B5; C1–C5; D2–D4; and X. Citations in the text are made according to Vogel's letter/number system.

[5] D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, 2nd ed. (Calcutta, 1965), 230 (I have silently corrected two misprints in the passage cited).

[6] Vogel, *EI* 20 (1929): 17.

[7] Vogel, *EI* (1929): 16 n. 2; B3, C1, D2 and D4.

[8] Vogel, *EI* (1929): 29 n. 1.

[9] Dutt, "Notes on the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa Inscriptions," 649–50, and N. Dutt, *Buddhist Sects in India* (Calcutta 1970), 124–25.

[10] L. de la Vallée Poussin, "Notes et bibliographie bouddhiques," *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 1 (1931–32): 383.

[11] A. M. Shastri, *An Outline of Early Buddhism (A Historical Survey of Buddhology, Buddhist Schools and Sanghas Mainly Based on the Study of Pre-Gupta Inscriptions)* (Varanasi, 1965), 29–30; cf. A. M. Shastri, "The Legendary Personality of the Buddha as Depicted in Pre-Gupta Indian Inscriptions," *The Orissa Historical Research Journal* 8 (1960): 172–73.

lastic definitions and conceptions of the Buddha, did not go unquestioned. In editorial notes added to Vogel's initial publication of the inscriptions in *Epigraphia Indica*, H. Sastri said "to me it does not appear to be impossible that the Mahāchetiya has been specified in these inscriptions as 'protected by the corporeal remains of the Buddha' and that the genitive case is used here to discriminate this *stūpa* from others not similarly consecrated."[12] Longhurst too was inclined toward this interpretation.[13] Even Dutt, three years before his "notes" on Vogel's treatment of the inscriptions, seems to have gone in this direction: he refers to one of the inscriptions and says it records "the gift of a pillar . . . to the caitya, enshrining a *dhātu* of Sammāsambuddha."[14]

There are basically two problems here. The interpretation of Vogel et al. takes *dhātuvara-parigahita* as one of the series of epithets governed by the initial *namo*. H. Sastri et al. want it rather to be a kind of "partitive" genitive constructed with the following *mahācetiye*. This is the first problem. The second, quite simply, is the meaning of *dhātuvaraparigahita*, the discussion so far having turned almost entirely on the significance of the final member of the compound.

The first problem arises in large part from the fact that the inscriptions are not punctuated. To quote again only the short form we find:

> namo bhagavato deva-rāja-sakatasa saṃma-saṃbudhasa dhātuvara-parigahitasa mahācetiye . . .

Vogel et al. understand a *daṇḍa* or full stop after *dhātuvaraparigahitasa*. Sastri's interpretation, however, implies a full stop after *saṃma-saṃbudhasa*. But at least two other inscriptions from Nāgārjunikoṇḍa indicate that neither of these constructions of the text is correct. "Āyaka-pillar inscription B2" opens not with the invocation to the Buddha, but with several lines praising the donor's father. The reference to the site at which the gift was made does not occur until almost the very end of the inscription and reads:

> bhagavato saṃma-sa[ṃ]budhasa dhātuvaraparigahītasa mahācetiye imaṃ khaṃbhaṃ patidhapaṃta [rd. patiṭhāpitaṃ] ti . . .

Here where the *namo* construction does not interfere it is clear that the genitives are constructed with *mahācetiye*, and that *dhātuvaraparigahīta* is an adjective modifying *saṃma-saṃbudhasa*. This is fully confirmed by the "First Apsidal Temple inscription E." This inscription also opens, like "Āyaka-pillar inscription B2," with the praise of a relative of the donor. Here the gift recorded is said to have been made at:

> saṃma-saṃbudhasa dhātu-[vara][15]-parigahitasa mahācetiya-pādamūle . . .

Once again, without the *namo* + genitive construction, there is no doubt as to how the text is to be constructed. In light of these two unambiguous cases it seems fairly sure that *dhātuvaraparigahitasa* everywhere must be an adjective modifying *saṃma-saṃbudhasa*, and that *saṃma-saṃbudhasa dhātuvaraparigahitasa* everywhere must be taken not as a part of the string of epithets in the genitive governed by *namo*, but as a separate adjectival phrase modifying *mahācetiye*. This is only more fully confirmed if we notice that although almost all our Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions open with or contain a *namo* invocation consisting of strings of *different* epithets of the Buddha, the collocation *saṃma-saṃbudhasa dhātuvara-parigahitasa* occurs *only* in inscriptions which make reference to the *mahācetiya* and *always* immediately precedes the noun *mahācetiya* in the locative. Just this much allows some improvement in our understanding of the text which, in the short form of the formula, might now be read:

> namo bhagavato deva-rājasakatasa [|] saṃma-saṃbudhasa dhātuvaraparigahitasa mahācetiye . . .
>
> "Homage to the Blessed One, he who is honored by the King of the Gods! At the Great Shrine of the Perfectly Enlightened One who is *dhātuvaraparigahita* . . ."

While this is an improvement it still leaves us, obviously, with the problem of the meaning of *dhātuvaraparigahita*. Although most previous discussions have concerned the meaning of the final member of the compound and, only correlatively, the first, the meaning of the middle term *may* also be of significance.

dhātu- in our inscriptions has been taken by most interpreters—as we have seen—in the sense of "sphere," "state," "condition," and assimilated to *nirvāṇa-dhātu*,

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[12] Vogel, *EI* 20 (1929): 29 n. 1.

[13] A. H. Longhurst, *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgārjunikoṇḍa, Madras Presidency* (Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, no. 54) (Delhi, 1938), 18.

[14] Dutt, "Discovery of a Bone-Relic at an Ancient Centre of Mahāyāna," 794.

[15] The "scribe" has omitted *-vara-* here, but this is almost certainly only another instance of the "carelessness" in these records noted by Vogel; cf. also *EI* 20 (1929): 21, nt. 2.

or even *dharmadhātu*. This interpretation is, however, put forth without any justification—de la Vallée Poussin refers to his suggestion as "a conjectural explanation"—and it appears in fact to be unjustifiable. While not uncommon in this sense in Abhidharmic, scholastic and learned literature, or even in the technical vocabulary of the sūtras,[16] *dhātu* by itself is never certainly found with this meaning anywhere in Buddhist donative inscriptions which are prior to the medieval period, and even after this period one would be hard pressed to find a single unambiguous instance in donative inscriptions of this use.

Where it occurs in contemporaneous or—by Indian standards—nearly contemporaneous Buddhist donative inscriptions, *dhātu* always and unambiguously appears to mean "relic."[17] This is the case whether the term occurs in association with an explicit reference to the person of the Buddha—as it does in several Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions—or without such an association, as in a pillar inscription from Amarāvatī. We find, for example, *śastakhadhatu*, "the collar-bone relic of the Lord," in the Mathurā Elephant inscription;[18] or *bhagavato śakamuni[sa] dhatuve pratiṭhavita*, "des reliques du Bienheureux Śākyamuni ont été déposées" in both the Bhagamoya and Kopśakasa reliquary inscriptions;[19] or again in both the Taxila Silver Scroll inscription and the Taxila Gold Plate inscription we find reference to the deposition of *bhagavato dhatu*, "relics of the Blessed One."[20] The Amarāvatī pillar inscription already referred to records the gift of "a chaitya pillar with a relic," *cetiyakhabho sadhāduko dānaṃ*, without specifying to whom the relic "belongs."[21]

But if the term *dhātu* always appears to be used in the sense of "relic" in Buddhist inscriptions connected with shrines—stūpas, caityas, pillars, etc.—the same is true of its usage in literary texts wherever it occurs in narrative passages dealing with shrines. *dhātu* in the sense of "sphere," "condition," etc., never appears to be found in such contexts, unless it is specifically compounded with *nirvāṇa*, and *dhātu* alone is never used to stand for *nirvāṇa-dhātu*.[22] There would be little point in surveying all such passages, but it is worth noting an exact parallel to the first two members of our compound, *dhātuvara*, which occurs in an "historical" literary text which—again by Indian standards—is quite close in time to our inscriptions, and quite near in geographical location. This parallel seems to render the equations *dhātuvara* = *dharmadhātu*, or *dhātu-vara* = *nirvāṇa-dhātu*, altogether untenable.

We know from two inscriptions that there was during the period under discussion—the late 3rd/early 4th century C.E.—a community of Sri Lankan monks at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa.[23] It is therefore of some interest that the term *dhātuvara* occurs at least three times in the *Dīpavaṃsa*, which was "composed" sometime in the 4th century,[24] in a particularly important context. When Sumana was given instructions to go to Pāṭaliputta to get what would be one of the most important relics in Sri Lanka, an "object" which would make it possible for the monks living there "*to see the Buddha*," he was told to ask Aśoka: *dehi dhātuvaraṃ tassa*, "grant him the most excellent of relics." When Sumana arrives he says to Aśoka: "your friend, Great King, has faith in the teaching of the Buddha. Grant him the most excellent of relics. He is

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[16] See the long entry on *dhātu* in F. Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary* (New Haven, 1953), 282–84.

[17] Cf. the very problematic passage in the Senavarma reliquary inscription, *ime śarireṇa tadagada-prava-diśa ṇivaṇa-dhatu-gade ta pratiṭhavemi* (7c–d) where if *dhatu* were to be constructed with the preceding *ṇivaṇa-* we might have an instance where the sense of "sphere," etc. was in play. But this passage, in spite of the efforts of Bailey, Fussman and Salomon, remains, as the last of these scholars says, "highly obscure;" H. W. Bailey, "A Kharoṣṭrī Inscription of Seṇavarma, King of Oḍi", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1980): 21–29; G. Fussman, "Documents épigraphiques kouchans (III). L'inscription kharoṣṭhī de senavarma, roi d'oḍi: une nouvelle lecture," *Bulletin de l'école française d'extrême-orient* (= *BEFEO*) 71 (1982): 1–45; R. Salomon, "The Inscription of Senavarma, King of Oḍi," *Indo-Iranian Journal* (= *IIJ*) 29 (1986): 261–93.

[18] S. Konow, *Kharoshṭhī Inscriptions with the Exception of those of Aśoka* (Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, II.1) (Calcutta, 1929) XVI: 49–50.

[19] G. Fussman, "Nouvelles inscriptions śaka (II)," *BEFEO* 73 (1984): 33–38; 38–46; R. Salomon, "The Bhagamoya Relic Bowl Inscription," *IIJ* 27 (1984): 107–20.

[20] Konow, *Kharoshṭhī Inscriptions*, XXVII: 70–77; XXXI: 83–86.

[21] C. Sivaramamurti, *Amaravati Sculptures in the Madras Government Museum* (Bulletin of the Madras Government Museum, n.s. IV) (Madras, 1977), 283, no. 47.

[22] But see Aśvaghoṣa's use of *dhātu* cited below.

[23] Vogel, *EI* 20 (1929): 22; D. C. Sircar and A. N. Lahiri, "Footprint Slab Inscription from Nagarjunikoṇḍa," *EI* 33 (1960): 247–50.

[24] K. R. Norman, *Pāli Literature. Including the Canonical Literature in Prakrit and Sanskrit of All the Hīnayāna Schools of Buddhism* (A History of Indian Literature, Vol. VII, Fasc. 2) (Wiesbaden, 1983), 115ff.

going to make a stūpa for the Teacher (*sahāyo te mahārāja pasanno buddhasāsane | dehi dhātuvaraṃ tassa thūpaṃ kāhati satthuno*)." Sumana then goes and makes a similar request to Kosiya (Indra) in almost exactly the same words: *devānampiyo rājā so pasanno buddhasāsane | dehi dhātuvaraṃ tassa karissati thūpam uttamaṃ.*[25]

Although seemingly a small point, it is worth noting the language used in the request Sumana was told to, and did, make to Aśoka: *dhātuvara* and "the Teacher" do not appear to have been thought of here as different things. The stūpa which was to be built to house the *dhātuvara*, is specifically said to be "for the Teacher," not—be it noted—for a part of the Teacher or for something belonging to the Teacher. And if the language here only suggests that the relic was not thought of as merely a part of the physical remains of the Buddha, but was thought to be the Buddha himself, this—like so much else in the *Dīpavaṃsa*—is explicitly stated in the *Mahāvaṃsa*. In the *Mahāvaṃsa* account of the same events being narrated in our passages from the *Dīpavaṃsa*, Mahinda complains to Devānampiya saying: "For a long time, O King, we have not seen the Perfect Buddha, the Teacher" (*ciradiṭṭho hi saṃbuddho satthā no manujādhipa*); to which the King replies: "But did you not tell me, Revered Sir, that the Perfect Buddha is extinguished/dead?" (*bhāsittha nanu bhante me: saṃbuddho nibbuto iti*); to which Mahinda replies in turn: "When the relics are seen (or 'are present'), the Buddha is seen (or 'is present')" (*dhātusu diṭṭhesu diṭṭho hoti jino iti*).[26]

It is also worth noting that *dhātuvara* continues to be used in the *vaṃsa* literature. It occurs twice, for example, in the *Thūpavaṃsa* which probably dates to the 13th century; once in the rather florid opening verse, and once to refer to the same relic that the *Dīpavaṃsa* also referred to as *dhātuvara*.[27] It occurs again in the *Chakesadhātuvaṃsa*, which, though of unknown author or date, is clearly later and yet gives clear expression to the same conception of a relic as is found at the very beginning of the *vaṃsa* literature in the *Dīpa-* and *Mahāvaṃsa*. In one passage, for example, we find the enshrinement of a relic described in the following terms: ". . . having taken the relic of the Buddha from his head [where he had placed it out of respect], having bathed it with water from Sakka's jar, saying: 'may the Reverend Blessed One live/dwell at this place for five thousand years for the benefit of all living things,' he enshrined it" (. . . *dasabalassa dhātuṃ sīsato oropayitvā sakkabhiñkārodakena nhāpetvā bhante bhagavā imasmiṃ ṭhāne sakalajanahitatthaṃ pañcavassasahassapamāṇaṃ tiṭṭhā 'ti vatvā ṭhapesi*).[28] We might notice again the language used in this passage from the *Chakesadhātuvaṃsa*. Notice for example, that in speaking to the relic the same titles are used as are used in addressing the Buddha himself: *bhante bhagavā*; or, rephrased, that the request to dwell or live for a long time at the place in question, although spoken to the relic, is addressed to the Buddha. Again, the relic and the Buddha do not appear to have been thought of as separate things.

Of course the *Chakesadhātuvaṃsa* is a late text, but its conception of a relic is not. The same conception is already found, as we have seen, in the *Mahā-* and *Dīpavaṃsa*, the latter especially being only slightly later than our inscriptions from Nāgārjunikoṇḍa. Something like it is also found, as I have already pointed out elsewhere, in inscriptions and textual sources which are somewhat earlier than our Nāgārjunikoṇḍa epigraphs.[29] In the Kopśakasa reliquary inscription, for instance, which has been dated to 26 C.E. and which records the deposition of "reliques du bienheureux Śākyamuni," these relics (*dhaduve*) are said to be *śila-paribhavida sama(s)i-paribhaveṃtu praña-paribhavida*, "saturated/invigorated/enlivened by morality, concentration, and wisdom." The inscription of Senavarma, King of Oḍi, which also dates to the early 1st century C.E., also contains a very similar characterization of the relics of Śākyamuni. Here the relics (*dhadu*) are characterized as *śila(pari)bhavita samasiprañavimutiñaṇadra(śa)paribhavita*, "saturated/

[25] H. Oldenberg, *The Dīpavaṃsa: An Ancient Buddhist Historical Record* (London and Edinburgh, 1879), 79.14, 79.21, 80.8.

[26] W. Geiger, *The Mahāvaṃsa* (London, 1908), XVII.2–3; on the relationship of the *Mahāvaṃsa* to the *Dīpavaṃsa* see Norman, *Pāli Literature*, 115.

[27] N. A. Jayawickrama, *The Chronicle of the Thūpa and the Thūpavaṃsa* (Sacred Books of the Buddhists, Vol. XXVII) (London, 1971), 147.1; 201.1; on the date of the *Thūpavaṃsa* see Norman, *Pāli Literature*, 142–43.

[28] I. P. Minayeff, "The Cha-kesa-dhātu-vaṃsa," *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* (1885): 10.11; 8.15; cf. B. C. Law, "An Account of the Six Hair Relics of the Buddha (Chakesadhātuvaṃsa)," *Journal of Indian History* 30 (1952): 193–204; on the date of the *Chakesadhātuvaṃsa* see Norman, *Pāli Literature*, 143.

[29] G. Schopen, "Burial 'ad sanctos' and the Physical Presence of the Buddha in Early Indian Buddhism: A Study in the Archeology of Religion," *Religion* 17 (1987): 204–6.

invigorated/enlivened by morality, saturated/invigorated/enlivened by concentration, wisdom, emancipation, knowledge and vision."[30]

At the very least this must mean that the relics are characterized by—full of—exactly the same spiritual forces and faculties that characterize, in fact constitute and animate, the living Buddha. To speak of an inanimate object in these terms, to speak of an inanimate object as "saturated or invigorated by morality or concentration" would at least require some explanation. But, as a matter of fact, with one apparent exception, Buddhist sources do not speak of inanimate objects in such terms. When *paribhāvita*, the participle in these inscriptions, is used in literary sources it is always used—again with one apparent exception—in reference to two related categories of "things": (1) "living persons"—like ascetics or bodhisattvas—(or that which distinguishes those persons from inanimate objects: their mental faculties, mind or consciousness [*citta, manas, vijñāna*, etc.]); and (2) "objects" which contain life or are capable of being enlivened, like a body or an egg that is being incubated.[31] It is, for example, as a result of being "sat on" (*adhisayita*), "heated" (*parasidita*), and "saturated/invigorated" by a hen that a chicken's egg "lives."[32] Conversely, in at least one text, *aparibhāvitakāya*, "having an uninvigorated body," is twice paired with *alpāyuṣka*, "having a short life."[33] The necessary connection suggested here between being *paribhāvita* by something and continuing to live is made even more explicit elsewhere. There is in fact at least one remarkable passage which has come down to us in both Pāli and Sanskrit which indicates that what is "invigorated with morality and wisdom"—as relics are said to be—is what continues to live after the breakup of the body. The Pāli version of this passage, which is now found in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, provides us the fullest indication of its setting: a devout layman from Kapilavatthu expresses to the Buddha the anxieties he has about what will happen to him after death (*imamhi cāhaṃ samaye kālaṃ kareyyaṃ kā mayhaṃ gati ko abhisamparāyo iti*). The Buddha reassures him (*mā bhāyi . . . mā bhāyi . . .*) and tells him that after the destruction of the body "the mind that is for a long time saturated/invigorated/enlivened by faith, saturated/invigorated by morality, learning, renunciation and wisdom, goes upward, goes to distinction" (*cittaṃ dīgharattaṃ saddhāparibhāvitam sīla-suta-cāga[paññā]-paribhāvitaṃ, tam uddhagāmi hoti visesagāmi*).[34]

When *paribhāvita* is used in Buddhist literary sources it appears, then, always to express something like "impregnated with active force," "invigorated or enlivened by," and is used—with one exception—in reference to living persons and that which animates living persons, or objects which contain life. The exception is of course relics, whether the term used is *dhātu* or *śarīra*. Literary sources too—like inscriptions—characterize relics as "saturated or invigorated with virtue and wisdom." We might look at just two examples which are somewhat earlier than the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions, but probably nearly contemporaneous with the Senavarma and Kopśakasa reliquary inscriptions.

A particularly interesting example comes from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā* which some have associated—though not necessarily convincingly—with South India and the area around Nāgārjunikoṇḍa.[35] Here we find it said that *itaḥ prajñāpāramitāto nirjātāni tāni tathāgataśarīrāṇi pūjaṃ labhante yad uta prajñāpāramitāparibhāvitatvāt*, "these relics of the Tathāgata, being born from the Perfection of Wisdom, receive worship—that is to say from the fact that they are invigorated by the Perfection of Wisdom."[36] Here *paribhāvita* is glossed by *nirjāta*, "to be born, given life." Elsewhere in the text it is, for example, the "all knowledge" of the Buddha that is said to be "born

[30] Fussman, *BEFEO* 73 (1984): 38ff.; Fussman, *BEFEO* 71 (1982): 4, 7a–b; Salomon, *IIJ* 29 (1986): 265. There are several additional references to "relics" in the Senavarma inscription which seem to point in the same direction. I hesitate to cite them, however, since in spite of the fine efforts of both Fussman and Salomon they remain obscure. Note only that in 12b the "relic" deposited by Senavarma seems clearly to be characterized as "immortal" or "deathless" (*amudae dhatue*), and cf. n. 17 above.

[31] Schopen, *Religion* 17 (1987): 206.

[32] *Majjhima* i 104; 357; *Saṃyutta* iii 153; *Aṅguttara* iv 125; 176; *Vinaya* iii 3. All references to canonical Pāli sources are to the editions published by the Pāli Text Society.

[33] N. Dutt, *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. I (Srinagar, 1934), 50.19; 51.6 (the last is misprinted in *Religion*, n. 62 as 50.6).

[34] *Saṃyutta* v 369–70; the Sanskrit version of this passage is cited in L. de La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu* (Paris, 1923–31; repr. 1971), II: 95, n. 1. For Hindu and Jain instances of the use of the participle *-bhāvita* in similar contexts, see Edgerton, "The Hour of Death," *ABORI* 8.3 (1927): 225, 227.

[35] See, for example, E. Conze, *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature*, 2nd ed. (Tokyo, 1978), 1ff.

[36] P. L. Vaidya, *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* (Buddhist Sanskrit Texts, no. 4) (Darbhanga, 1960), 49.6.

from the Perfection of Wisdom" (*prajñāpāramitā-nirjātā hi . . . tathāgatānām arhatāṃ samyaksaṃbuddhānāṃ sarvajñatā*).[37] What gives life to and animates the "all knowledge" of the Buddha, gives life to and animates the relic.

The second passage we might cite comes from a very different type of literature and is particularly significant because of that. Aśvaghoṣa in his *Buddhacarita* characterizes the relics (*khams, dhātu*) of Śākyamuni as "full of virtue" (*dge legs gaṅ ba*). He then intentionally plays on several senses of the word *dhātu*: "the jars hold the great relics . . . like the jewelled ore (*dhātu*) of a great mountain, and the relics (*dhātu*) are unharmed by fire, just as the sphere (*dhātu*) of the chief of the gods (Brahmā) in heaven (is unharmed by the fire at the end of the aeon)." "These bones," he says, are "informed (*paribhāvita?*) with universal benevolence (*maitrī*)" (*byams pas yoṅs su rnam par bsgoms pa*).[38]

Notice that when *dhātu* is used here in the sense of "sphere" that sense is secondary and forced and occurs in a context of contrived and learned word play. This sort of learned artfulness is absent from our Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions. The primary meaning of *dhātu* in Aśvaghoṣa is, as everywhere in passages dealing with the physical remains of Śākyamuni, "relic." Notice too that Aśvaghoṣa, who can be dated fairly firmly to the 1st century C.E., characterizes relics as full of what can only be human qualities—"virtue" and "universal benevolence"—and in doing so appears to use at least once the same participle, or something very near to it, as was used by both contemporary or nearly contemporary canonical sūtra texts and Indian inscriptions.

Aśvaghoṣa was, of course, no ordinary monk. His work exhibits immense learning and broad culture. The range of sources he was able to draw upon is, as Johnston has shown, daunting.[39] For just that reason the conception of relics articulated in the *Buddhacarita* is particularly important: it represents a conception current not among "the masses" or village monks, but a conception current among the most learned, cultured, and educated of monastic circles. The fact that there is a marked consistency in both conception and vocabulary in regard to relics in such diverse sources as Buddhist epigraphical records, canonical or paracanonical texts, historical or *vaṃsa* literature, and learned poetical works of "high" literature, makes it possible justifiably to assert that this conception of the relic—the conception that takes the relic as a living presence animated and characterized by the same qualities that animated and characterized the living Buddha—is the one conception that had general currency in the Buddhist world in the period that both preceded and followed the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions. This same material also clearly establishes the wide currency of the term *dhātu* in the sense of "relic" for the same period. It is therefore virtually certain that it is this sense of the word *dhātu*, and this conception of a relic, that is to be expected in the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions as well. To assert otherwise would require clear evidence and this is not forthcoming.

The occurrence of the expression *dhātuvara* in the *vaṃsa* literature, where the sense of the second element is fairly obvious, supports the derivation of *vara*, the second member of the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa compound, from $\sqrt{2}$ *vṛ*, and suggests the likelihood that the interpreters of the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions were correct in assigning to it there the sense of "the most excellent," "the best," etc. But in light of the fact that *dhātuvara* occurs in the inscriptions in close association with the term *mahācetiya*, the latter denoting a stūpa or monumental reliquary, one other *possible* derivation suggests itself. It is *possible*—but only that—to derive *-vara-* from $\sqrt{1}$ *vṛ* and see in it the meaning "enclosing," "surrounding," and therefore "room" or "chamber." *dhātuvara-* would then be almost perfectly parallel to *dhātugarbha*, "relic chamber," which is, of course, well attested. This interpretation of *-vara-*, moreover, may receive some support from at least one other Buddhist inscription, the "Sui Vihār copper-plate inscription of the year 11," which was recovered from the chamber of a ruined stūpa. *Although it is itself not without difficulties*, it appears to record in addition to the "foundation of the staff" (of the stūpa) (*yaṭhipratiṭhanaṃ ṭhapa[i]cham*), the gift of the *pari-vara* or *anu-pari-vara* as well. As one possible meaning of the latter, Konow suggests that *anu-pari-vara* must have the same meaning as he assigned to *pari-vara*—"cover," "surrounding wall or hedge," "enclosure"—and "refer

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[37] Vaidya, *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* 36.1.

[38] *Buddhacarita*, XXVII.77–79 (this is misprinted in *Religion*, n. 56, as XXVIII.77–79); I cite here the translation and Sanskrit equivalents given in E. H. Johnston, "The Buddha's Mission and Last Journey; Buddhacarita, XV–XXVIII," *Acta Orientalia* 15 (1937): 276; the Tibetan is cited from the *Peking Tripiṭaka* reprinted in Japan, Vol. 129, no. 5656, 169-4-8 to 169-5-3.

[39] For a discussion of both Aśvaghoṣa's date and his learning see E. H. Johnston, *The Buddhacarita or Acts of the Buddha*, Part II (Calcutta, 1935–36, repr. 1972), xvii; xxiv–lxxix; B. Bhattacharya, *Aśvaghoṣa: A Critical Study* (Santiniketan, 1976), 20; etc.

to the chamber raised around the relics, after the *yaṭhi* had been put up."[40] That *vara* might have this sense in the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions is possible and only that. To establish that it did would require much fuller and less uncertain evidence.

parigahita, the final of the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa compound, has been taken in one of two ways: either "absorbed (by)" or "protected (by)." But the participle occurs in several other compounds in the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions. It occurs several times in an adjectival compound used to describe a male member of the ruling family. He is called *virūpakhapatimahāsena-parigahita*, which Vogel translates as "absorbed by Mahāsena the Lord of Virūpakhas" in one place, but as "favoured (absorbed?) by Mahāsena, etc." in another.[41] Although it proved awkward, since Vogel had translated *parigahita* in our compound by "absorbed," he appears to have felt it should have the same force in this compound. Others, like H. Sastri and Sircar, have taken the term here to mean "protected by."[42]

parigahita also occurs in Vogel's C1 and C2: *ācariyānaṃ aparamahāvinas[e]liyāna[ṃ]* suparigahitaṃ *imaṃ mahācetiyanavakaṃma[ṃ]*, "this new construction, the Great Shrine, was fully received (or 'taken possession of') by the Teachers of the Aparamahāvinaseliya sect."[43] Yet another usage is attested in the "First Apsidal Temple inscription E," and in two other places, where the gift recorded is said to be *savaniyuta[ṃ] cātusala-parigahitaṃ sela-maṃṭava[ṃ]*; Vogel translates as "a stone shrine [Skt. *maṇḍapa*] surrounded by a cloister and provided with everything."[44]

Having established with a fair degree of probability what *dhātuvara* means in our inscriptions allows us to eliminate some of the meanings ascribed to *parigahita*. Although the meaning "protected" fits well in several contexts, since our compound, *dhātuvaraparigahita*, describes the Buddha, and not the *Mahacetiya*, it seems unlikely there: the Buddha almost certainly

[40] S. Konow, *Kharoshṭhī Inscriptions*, 141; see also—for other meanings of *parivara*—pp. 38, 60, 170. For earlier interpretations of the inscription see the sources cited in Konow, 141 notes 2–6; more recently D. R. Patik, "The Origin of Memorial Stones," in S. Settar and G. D. Sontheimer (eds.), *Memorial Stones. A Study of Their Origin, Significance and Variety* (Dharwad, 1982), 52–53; G. Schopen, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism: The Layman/Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of the Transference of Merit," *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10 (1985): 30. There are at least two other sources which might also suggest that *dhātu-vara* was intended to refer to a structure holding relics. Sircar sees in vs. 16 of the Mandasor stone inscription of the time of Prabhākara the expression *dhātuvara*, and the term here—if this is the correct reading—is clearly used interchangeably with the term *stūpa*. Sircar says in a note: "*Dhātu-vara* really means the relics of the Buddha; but here it means a *stūpa* built on the Buddha's relics. Such *stūpas* were usually called *dhātu-garbha*" (Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, 409 and n. 3). Unfortunately Garde, the first to read the inscription, read not *dhātu-vara*, but *dhātu-dhara* (M. B. Garde, "Mandasor Inscription of Malava Samvat 524", *EI* 27 (1947–48): 15), although Agrawala, to whom we owe the most recent edition, reads—as did Sircar—*dhātuvara* (P. K. Agrawala, *Imperial Gupta Epigraphs* [Varanasi, 1983], 81). In fact the reading in the published facsimiles is problematic. A comparison of the third *akṣara* of the compound with the *akṣara -va-* elsewhere in the inscription (line 1, 8th *akṣara*; line 5, 15th *akṣara*; etc.) would argue against reading the *akṣara* in our compound as *-va-*; but a comparison of it with the *-dhā-* of the immediately preceding *dhātu-* does not unambiguously support Garde either. On balance all we can say is that the *akṣara* is uncertain, although it looks to me more like *-dha-* than *-va-*. (Incidentally, this verse in the Mandasor inscription, like the verse from the *Buddhacarita* cited above, seems to contain a pun or word play involving the word *dhātu*). The second source which may use the compound *dhātu-vara* to refer to a structure holding relics is literary. In G. Sastri's edition of the *Rājavyākaraṇa-parivarta* of the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* the term *dhātu-vara* occurs repeatedly in contexts that make it certain that it is being used interchangeably with the term *stūpa*, and the Tibetan version supports this: it consistently translates *dhātu-vara* by *mchod rten*. But almost as consistently Sāṅkṛityāyana "corrects" every occurrence of *dhātu-vara* into *dhātu-dhara*. Since it is not clear if Sāṅkṛityāyana's "corrections" are based on anything but the Tibetan, and since the manuscript tradition of the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* is notoriously problematic, it is difficult to cite this material with confidence (see K. P. Jayaswal, *An Imperial History of India* [Lahore: 1934], vss. 427, 431, 531, 588, 589, etc.; cf. vss. 416, 574, etc.).

[41] Vogel, *EI* 20 (1929): 17; 21.

[42] Vogel, *EI* 20 (1929): 29 n. 1, 30 n. 2, (notes marked "Ed."); Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, 230, n. 3.

[43] Elsewhere in the inscriptions from Nāgārjunikoṇḍa *parigahe* (E; J. Ph. Vogel, "Additional Prakrit Inscriptions from Nāgārjunikoṇḍa", *EI* 21 [1931], M2, M3) is found in the same context—once (H) *suparigahe*. *parigahe* is more in conformity with Buddhist epigraphical usage elsewhere.

[44] *cātusāla-parigahita* also occurs in Vogel, *EI* 21 (1931), M4 and in H. Sarkar, "A Note on Some Fragmentary Inscriptions from Nāgārjunikoṇḍa," *EI* 38 (1969): 176.

would not be, nor need to be "protected" by "the most excellent relic." It also seems unlikely that he would be described as "taken possession of" by the relic. Vogel's "absorbed in," though not impossible, is a meaning which is both rather far from the primary meaning of *parigahita* and not easily attested. This would seem to leave only "surrounded by" or "enclosed in"—a sense which is quite close to the literal meaning of *parigahita* and therefore involves the least amount of conjecture.

Our discussion, then, generates at least one clear alternative to the previous interpretations of the formula found in the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions, and one other interpretation which is at least possible. The short form of the formula might, in light of our discussion, be better translated as:

> Homage to the Blessed One, he who is honored by the king of the gods! At the Great Shrine of the Perfectly Enlightened One *who is enclosed within the most excellent relic* . . .

or possibly—but again only that—we might be able to translate *saṃma-saṃbudhasa dhātuvaraparigahitasa mahācetiye* . . . as:

> At the Great Shrine of the Perfectly Enlightened One who is enclosed in the relic chamber . . .

If we adopt the first and most likely of these interpretations the wording of our Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions would seem to indicate that their redactor *did not* think of the *dhātu* or "relic" as a piece or a part of the Buddha. He seems, in fact, to have thought of it as something which contained or enclosed the Buddha himself, something in which the Buddha was wholly present. But if the Buddha was present in the relic, the relic could not represent—as has sometimes been argued—a token or reminder of the past and "dead" Buddha: for the Buddha to be present he would have to have been thought of as alive. And such a living "relic" could of course be characterized as "saturated or envigorated with morality, knowledge and wisdom."

Even if we adopt the second interpretation the resultant meaning is much the same. In this case the inscriptions do not refer to the relic of the Buddha in the shrine, but to the Buddha himself being enclosed within its "relic" chamber. The wording again would indicate that it is not a part or piece of the departed Buddha that is there in the chamber, but the Buddha himself who is wholly present there. In both interpretations the conception of a "relic" seems to be very much the same. Both interpretations are only variant forms of the conception of a "relic" already articulated in the Senavarma and Kopśakasa reliquary inscriptions, in Aśvaghoṣa and the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, and both suggest that the redactor of the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions—almost certainly a monk—thought of the Buddha as a living presence dwelling in his shrine.

Although we do not necessarily know anything about the redactor of our inscriptions we do know something about the individual who "completed" the construction of the shrine and the erection of the pillars on which the inscriptions are inscribed. He is described in two of the inscriptions where we find, in Vogel's translation:

> . . . this pious foundation of the Mahācetiya has been completed by the Reverend Ānanda, who knows the *Dīgha-* and the *Majjhima-nikāyas* by heart, (who is) a disciple of the masters of the Ayira-haṃgha (Skt. *Ārya-saṅgha*) who are resident in Paṃṇagāma and who are preachers and preceptors of the *Dīgha*, the *Majjhima-[nikāya]* and of the five *Mātukas*. This pious work, the Mahācetiya, was completed and the pillars were erected.[45]

The Reverend Ānanda—although not specifically designated as such here—appears to have been the *navakammika*, the monk appointed as the superintendent of construction of religious buildings.[46] The construction of the cetiya and the erection of the pillars was overseen by him. As a consequence, even if he was not himself the redactor of the inscriptions incised on the pillars, he would still have been responsible for their content, and they would have to have been approved by him. This would mean that the views expressed in the inscriptions—notably the conception of a relic—must represent the view and conceptions which were either dictated by, or redacted under the auspices of, a very learned monk, a monk "who knew by heart both the *Dīgha-* and *Majjhima-nikāyas*." They do not, again, represent the views of an uneducated village monk. They do not represent a "popular" conception of a relic, but an official monastic conception.

We also know that the *Mahācetiya* at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa was "accepted or taken possession of by," or "belonged to," the Aparamahāvinaseliya teachers (*ācariyānaṃ aparamahāvinas[e]liyāna[ṃ] suparigahitaṃ imaṃ mahācetiyanavakaṃma[ṃ]*, C1, C2). But

[45] Vogel, *EI* 20 (1929): 17 (C1), 19 (C2).

[46] cf. M. Njammasch, "Der *navakammika* und seine Stellung in der Hierarchie der buddhistischen Klöster," *Altorientalische Forschungen* 1 (1974): 279–93.

what little we think we know about the doctrinal position of the Aparamahāvinaseliya group—and this on the generous assumption that it is the same as the Aparaśaila—*appears* not to set altogether well with this fact. Both Vasumitra and Vinītadeva maintain that one of the tenets of this school was: *mchod rten la mchod pa ni 'bras bu mchog tu gyur pa ma yin no*, "l'acte de vénérer (*pūjākara*) un reliquaire (*stūpa*) ne procure pas un grand fruit."[47] Rosen has taken the *appearance* at face value and offered the following explanation:

> Amongst their [the Aparamahāvinaseliyas'] doctrines, according to Vasumitra, we find it stated that the worship of a *stūpa* or the worship of a *caitya* does not produce much fruit. Nevertheless, the fact that one of the largest *stūpas* in India was built for the benefit of this sect, indicates that they were willing to alter their practices to fit more modern times.[48]

Rosen, in referring to both *stūpas* and *caityas* has been misled in part by Bareau's paraphrase of Vasumitra.[49] The Tibetan text has only *mchod rten*, and while it is true that we cannot be sure whether this translated *stūpa* or *caitya*, both Bareau and Masuda translate their texts by "*stūpa*."[50] It is also true that one of the most notable characteristics of the Aparamahāvinaseliya inscriptions at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa is the complete avoidance of the term *stūpa*. Although it is used everywhere else in Buddhist inscriptions in India, the term never occurs at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa. There Buddhist "shrines" are always called *cetiyas*. This usage shows every sign of being intentional and very likely reflects a regional influence in the vocabulary applied to Buddhist sacred sites. In addition to these considerations our inscriptions make it clear that the *Mahācetiya* at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa was not conceived of as "un reliquaire," but as a structure housing the living presence of the Buddha—any worship of "it" would actually be of *him*.

But these considerations aside, Rosen's argument is still—in at least one aspect—a little startling. It is not known which of the several Vasumitras who appear in the history of Buddhist scholasticism was the author of the work on "les sectes bouddhiques" assigned to that name. What appears to be known is that the first translation of the work into Chinese took place at "la fin du iv^e siècle ou début du v^e siècle de notre ère." There is also general agreement that its author, whoever he was, was a Sarvāstivādin.[51] We have, then, an assertion by an unknown Sarvāstivādin author, of unknown geographic provenance, in a work of about the 4th century purporting to express the views of a group to which he did not belong. Over against this we have an historical record either written by, or redacted under the auspices of, a learned Aparamahāvinaseliya monk from Nāgārjunikoṇḍa in the 3rd century which was intended to record what a community of Aparamahāvinaseliya monks there actually did. By any criterion the historical value of the two sources for the history of the Aparamahāvinaseliya cannot be the same. It is, therefore, curious that Rosen takes as somehow more representative of the Aparamahāvinaseliya position not what Aparamahāvinaseliya monks in the 3rd century actually did, but what a Sarvāstivādin author of the 4th century said. This perfunctory preference for formal literary sources—which is quite common in historical works on Indian Buddhism—can only result in "histories of Buddhism" which have little relationship to what practicing Buddhists actually did. At the very least it rather effectively impedes an adequate appraisal or appreciation of other kinds of sources. But it is, in fact, precisely because our inscriptional formula from Nāgārjunikoṇḍa is one of these "other kinds of sources" that it is important.

If, for example, the phrase *saṃma-saṃbudhasa dhātuvara parigahitasa mahācetiye* means what I have suggested it does, then it would appear to be another piece of non-textual evidence that indicates that we have not yet understood at all well the Buddhist conception of "relics" or the nature of Buddhist sacred sites. I have recently collected evidence that indicates that the earliest actually attestable Buddhist conception of relics was that "la relique corporelle . . . c'est

[47] E. Teramoto and T. Hiramatsu, *Vasumitra's (dByig-Gi bÇes-gÑen) Samaya-Bhedoparacana-Cakra (gShuṅ-Lugs-kyi Bye-Brag bKod-Paḥi ḥKhor Lo)*, etc. (Kyoto, 1935), 9 (V), 42; A. Bareau, "Trois traités sur les sectes bouddhiques attribués à Vasumitra, Bhavya et Vinītadeva," *Journal Asiatique* (1954): 248 (VIII.2), etc.

[48] Rosen, "Buddhist Architecture and Lay Patronage at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa," 114.

[49] A. Bareau, *Les sectes bouddhiques du petit véhicule* (Paris, 1955), 105.

[50] Bareau, "Trois traités sur les sectes bouddhiques," 248; J. Masuda, "Origin and Doctrines of Early Indian Buddhist Schools," *Asia Major* 2 (1925): 38.

[51] Bareau, *Journal Asiatique* (1954): 231.

un être vivant 'doué de souffle'"; "that relics were thought to retain—to be infused with, impregnated with—the qualities that animated and defined the living buddha"; that the *stūpa* or reliquary was cognitively classified as a "living person of rank" and that it was—like the Hindu image—a "juristic personality" and owned property; that, finally, the Indian Buddhist community practiced a form of what in the West was called "burial *ad sanctos*" and that this can only be accounted for by the belief that the *stūpa* contained a living presence.[52] The formula found in the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions appears to be yet one more piece of this ever more clearly emerging complex of actual beliefs—as opposed to the formal literary doctrines—of practicing Indian Buddhists, both monk and lay.

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[52] Schopen, *Religion* 17 (1987): 193–225.